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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/649,554	08/25/2003	Radovan Kovacevic	021791.0110	5525

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EXAMINER

ELVE, MARIA ALEXANDRA

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1725

DATE MAILED: 02/08/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/649,554

Applicant(s)

KOVACEVIC ET AL.

Examiner

M. Alexandra Elve

Art Unit

1725

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 18-23 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16 and 24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15 and 17 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 August 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/05, 11/04, 12/03.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3, 7, 9 & 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Jeantette et al. (USPN 6,046,426).

Jeantette et al. discloses a method and system for producing three-dimensional complex shapes using a laser. The system includes a controller so that the flow of molten powdered materials can map out and form complex, three dimensional, net-shaped objects by layering the molten powdered material. The powder is contained in a hopper (2) having a flow sensor (37) and a feeder wheel (disk) (14). This is feed to the nozzle during the operation. (abstract, figures, col. 5, lines 1-54, col. 6, lines 7-29, col. 7, lines 1-19)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 4, 11-12, 14 & 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jeantette et al. as stated in the above paragraph and further in view of Keicher et al. (USPN 6,391,251).

Jeantette et al. does not teach a removal system associated with the disk feeder.

Keicher et al. discloses a CAD system for forming three-dimensional objects from powdered feedstock and a nozzle. The feedstock is contained in a reservoir and is metered from a feed disk. The disk has a wiper system, which aids in the movement of the powdered feedstock and the angle of repose of the powder feedstock prevents the disk from becoming overwhelmed and clogging with powder. (abstract, figures, col. 14, col. 16, col. 19-20)

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use a removal system, as taught by Keicher et al. in the Jeantette et al. system because it would ensure a quality product due to the continuous (uninterrupted) flow of powdered feedstock.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 18-23 are allowed.

Claims 5-6, 8, 10, 13, 15 & 17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the claims as supported by the specification differs from the prior art in that it

does not teach (i) varying the prescribed gap between the top surface and the output of the hopper or (ii) a vacuum powder removal device.

Conclusion


The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See US PTO-892.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to M. Alexandra Elve whose telephone number is 571-272-1173. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30-3:00 Monday to Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tom Dunn can be reached on 571-272-1171. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

February 6, 2005.


M. ALEXANDRA ELVE
PRIMARY EXAMINER